

**Area Administrator/Program Directors
April 29-30, 2008**

**Lincoln State Office Building
301 Centennial Mall South
6th Floor, VR Conference Room
Lincoln NE**

Tuesday, April 29, 2008

1. Succession Planning

Frank

Frank announced that when he retires Mark Schultz will be the next Director of VR. Frank doesn't have a date for his retirement but it will probably be within the next 18 months to 2 years.

2. Client Appeals Chapter

Pat

After the first year we haven't had a contract with the Mediation Centers as we have never used mediation with consumers. Pat had contact the Mediation Center in order to establish a process the Mediation Centers decided that they wanted to have a contract with us. The brochure for the Mediation Centers has been revised to reflect the current and correct information. The brochure will be available on VRIS and printed locally by staff, no printed copies will made. The contracts will be letter contracts and done by the State Office.

2. VRIS Updates

Margy

The process has been that all VRIS updates go to all staff. The question is when an update pertains to only a specific group of people, i.e. fiscal staff, should it only go out to Fiscal Staff. Mel indicated that personnel updates he has only sent it to Management staff. Should we consider going to a numbering system that is identified by year, i.e. 2008-1, 2008-2. We haven't eliminated any of the previous updates that have been superceded by more recent updates. Decided to not eliminate any of the previous updates from the list.

3. PHI Letter of Support

Frank, Margy

Several organizations have expressed interest in applying for the PWI grants and have asked for letters of support from VR. Omaha Goodwill and Central Nebraska Goodwill have indicated they are going to apply. Easter Seals has said they are interested but we don't know if they are going to apply or not. There is no guarantee that any of the applicants from Nebraska will receive one of the grants. Currently Nebraska doesn't have a PWI. Decided that we will write letters of support to both programs if their proposals will tie into VR's goals.

5. Discussion of Youth Leadership Position and Kearney YTRC Position

Jack

The Youth Leadership has now been posted and advertised in the Lincoln and Omaha papers and also has been posted to the UNL web site too. The position is a 2 year contract with medical benefits, vacation & sick leave built into the contract. They are not eligible for State Retirement however. They will be housed either in Lincoln or Omaha. It is being developed as a contract to determine how the position will evolve with the idea that this is a long term position that would turn into a regular position.

YRTC position has been in the works for quite some time. It would be a position that works with the YRTC, VR and HHS to do transition planning when the kids are released from the YRTC's back to the home, community and school. Often times when the kids are released they send them back to community without any

planning of what the kid is going to do. We are only asking for about \$4000 to fund this position. It appears that the HHS staff have trouble getting their heads around what this position really would be.

6. Placement Conference

Jim

All speakers have been confirmed. Expecting about 90 people. Expect from this conference that hospitals around the state will be able to hear Erin Riley speak about her experience with working with consumers with disabilities.

7. Transition Roundtable

Jack

About 50 staff have registered. Looking at policy and procedures for next year. Psychologists are coming to talk about testing they do in the schools. The TR committee has a subcommittee that is looking at developing an IPE booklet that could be used for TR students only. Judy suggested that the TR booklet be electronic since students are very computer literate and are more likely to use a computer rather than paper forms.

8. Follow-up to Strengths Finder's training

Janet

Scottsbluff, NP, Central Area, Norfolk, Arvin's team have scheduled strengths finder training. Amelis from Omaha West is going to pilot it with consumers. Two Kearney staff are thinking about piloting it with TR students. We will keep statistics to see how this impacts the career planning process and placement on jobs.

9. RSA Draft of Strategic Performance Plan Goals

Margy, Frank

Frank shared a draft of the performance standards that are being discussed with RSA. Several new ones and some of the current ones will stay. They are also looking at changes to the 911 and RSA 2. If we have comments regarding these performance goals let Margy or Frank know.

10. Procedure to Increase Social Security Reimbursement Dollars

Margy

In Wisconsin, where they purchase placement, they do not take a successful outcome on social security recipients until the end of 9 months. The placement provider follows along with the consumer closely and they have doubled their social security reimbursement.

Look to see how many SSDI or SSI beneficiaries are at SGA when we take a successful outcome. We may consider keeping social security cases open longer in order for consumers to make SGA which would allow us to claim reimbursement.

The Ticket to Work regs will be out soon. The regs will change on how we can claim reimbursement.

11. CSAVR Spring 2008 Conference

Margy

Margy gave an update from the CSAVR conference last week.

12. Transition Consent

Jack

We have problems getting applications signed by parents of transition students. Being unable to get the applications signed or the plan signed by the parents can cause the student to not receive services or delay services. Jack is going to talk with Scott about this situation and see if language can be added to the Transition Consent that would allow the student to sign their own application or plan if the parent/guardian agrees by signing the TR consent.

13. 90 Days to Plan for Transition Students

Jack

For transition students we don't want to rush into developing a plan just to get them written 90 days from eligibility. However, we also want to write plans when decisions have been made regarding the goal. Plans need to be developed if possible before they graduate.

14. FY 2009 State Plan Goals

Frank

Went over the goals that Frank and Margy had discussed with all the teams.

15. SRC Senatorial Luncheon

Jim

20 senators came to the Luncheon, good SRC participation and they would like to do it another year. Senators seemed to like it.

16. Rule 72

Margy

Effective 5 days after governor signs and files with secretary of state. Training has been scheduled with all of the teams.

Quality Employment Solutions newsletter is going through some changes. Going to start making it available by e-mail or on the web.

17. Search for Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner

Frank, Margy

The State Board had a special meeting in April and decided to hire a search firm to look for Doug's replacement. Doug and Polly have said they will be flexible on their end date.

18. Case Review Requirements

Janet

Currently AA's and OD's are required to do five cases per month. Judy, Roger, Gordon develop the questions that can be developed for the AA's and OD's use for quality case reviews. The compliance portion of case reviews can be accomplished with the current case review form and done by the program directors. Gil's reviews, state compliance, program director review and the review document developed around quality by the three AA's.

The 5 terminated case reviews by the AA's and OD's will be discontinued.

19. AIM Institute

Jim, Rod Armstrong

Developed CareerLink.com for employers to recruit employees. Employers pay a fee to post their jobs on this site. They have jobs posted all across the state. We discussed ways with Rod to link to the VR web site for employers. Jim and Pat will work with Rod to link to the page on the VR web site that would be most appropriate for employers.

20. Workers Comp

Jim

Currently if a state worker is injured the case is sent to Risk Management and the state's insurance carrier is Cambridge. Once the medical management piece is completed the injured worker's case is sent to Sticklett and Associates (private rehab). The question is do we want to look at getting back into Workers Comp with injured

state workers. Jim and Mark Schultz are planning to meet with Risk Management to explore opportunities. We can also meet with WC to see if there is a place for VR to work with injured workers early on before they get sent to Stricklett.

21. Mental Health Agreements

Cathy

the paperwork was sent to the MH providers last week with due date of May 12.

1. Clarified definition of outcome, that VR must be ready to take an outcome before they can take an outcome.
2. Removed the 25% requirement for non-SPMI
3. Added language to reallocate funds at the end of the year to providers who exceed outcomes from the providers who didn't meet their outcomes so there would be money available
4. changed progress report to remove SSN and use first initial and last name

Total amount of funds committed by VR for next year will be the same as this year. Some providers have asked if they could submit higher proposals than last year. Cathy told them to go ahead and submit it but the total amount for all agreements can't be higher than last year so it will depend on what each provider puts in their proposal.

22. Eligibility

Margy

How do we talk about eligibility with staff? Discussion on helping staff talk with consumers about eligibility.

23. Expanding Deaf Services

Pat

Decided to expand the area that Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell serves, now will include the Lincoln area, Omaha West area to include Fremont. Looking into the VRS system for Vicki and once that is in place this change will take place. All cases Vicki works with will be on her Omaha Dixon caseload.

24. Cost Sharing

Frank, Margy, Don

Once the new Rule has been approved cost sharing will no longer be part of the Rule. Do we want to ask for voluntary contributions? Car repair, eye glasses, hearing aids, these are the types of services that we get the most requests for.

Developing budgets with consumers so that they understand what expenses they have in order to help them plan appropriately to carry out the plan can help.

Give the opportunity to financially participate. Shouldn't be pushed, shouldn't look like cost sharing, not interested in any recording around, staff given instruction on how to ask for voluntary contributions. In order to do this some training needs to be given to staff, simple, straight forward message given to staff who are uncomfortable asking for contributions.

Janet and Don will look at how to include during the IPE planning training section of new staff training. It will be critical that the AA's and OD's model appropriate behavior on asking for voluntary contributions.